

LIT Connections

October 29, 2021

10:00-11:00



I define connection as the energy that exists between people when they feel seen, heard, and valued; when they can give and receive without judgement; and when they derive sustenance and strength from the relationship. ~ Brene Brown

Present: Cheryle Wilcox, Diane Bugbee, Matt Schibley, Alice Maynard, Alicia Hanrahan, Vicki Crocker, Kheya Ganguly, Sandi Yadow, Barb Joyal, Kristin Prior, Cinn Smith, Amy Lincoln-Moore, Vicki Whitehill, Belinda Bessette

Thank you for joining us at LIT Connections today.

Our discussion today included the following...

- The Rutland LIT is holding virtual trainings. The next one is 3:30-5:00 on Monday, please let Krista Barbagallo know if you would like to join. If folks have trainings they would like to share with others, Cheryle can post them to the IFS website.
- LIT survey was sent out from the Act 264 Board. The survey is looked at and valued. More time will be given to complete the survey and the System of Care report will be prepared for the end of January. The information is important, and we want to be thoughtful about the report.
- COVID numbers not declining in Vermont, how is this impacting providers, kids and families?
- Matt talked about the concept of languishing. We are dealing with something different than resiliency. The strategies to handle it are different. We haven't seen this before and don't have the tools. Matt shared an article from the New York Times: <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/04/19/well/mind/covid-mental-health-languishing.html>
- Anxiety is impacting children, families, caregivers, teachers, and other adults.
- People kept themselves COVID free with original COVID best practices prior to the vaccine. Now we have Delta.
- Orleans County is having an especially hard time with the highest rates in the state, it is impacting the entire community. Many more CSP requests, the asks are bigger. Trying to be as creative as possible, families are overwhelmed, jumping to residential requests.
- Languishing is a good way to describe what schools are feeling. Understaffed, overwhelmed. Home study numbers up, but not as high as last year. Parents frustrated remote learning not offered by schools. Families with kids with more intensive needs are struggling, especially those who need 2:1 supports. No independent school openings, lack of staff support, are seeing residential school referrals.
- Empathy for teachers, empathy for parents, have the supports but no one to provide them. Can't get kids into school, are there other ways to leverage school supports, receive school credit, flexible pathways? If we can't get kids into the building, how can break down the anxiety using mainstream resources from schools? How do we leverage it?
- There is a TED talk about languishing that was shared at a Howard Center community session.

Updates from the State Interagency Team yesterday...

- Laurel Omland from DMH helped us to organize our thinking for the System of Care report using an idea board.

- AHS is providing updates to the legislature about kids in Emergency Departments and efforts being made to address
- Secretary Smith facilitated an agreement with the VA for more adult inpatient mental health beds <https://vtdigger.org/2021/10/27/white-river-union-va-to-open-beds-for-non-veteran-mental-health-treatment/>
- Rutland mobile response pilot efforts underway
- Work is happening to make EDs more trauma informed
- Daily calls with hospitals and AHS departments, who's where, how can we problem solve to help people move where they need to be
- Treatment gaps related to eating disorders, we don't have a great system to address this
- Challenges in education related to decreased numbers of staff
- During all of this, there are also big initiatives happening - SB6, #988, CMS conflict free case management, payment reform. The thinking/planning for all of weighs heavily at the same time people are trying to navigate and provide services.
- VPA and VSBA met with legislature requesting that there be no new initiatives next year.

How do we take care of each other...

- There is a partnership in Springfield through the Child grant to provide wellness bags for families which promote health and wellness. Matt is looking into whether the grant could support wellness bags for providers.
- In Vicki Whitehill's building, the pharmacy brought care boxes to each staff member in the building, individually delivered. There were puzzles in the care bags and a designated space has been set aside at NKHS where people can go to work on a puzzle. It has been therapeutic. They will also be working on their community wide effort to make ornaments for residents in nursing homes.
- Gradually increasing our COVID bubble, getting together in person. Charges human battery.
- Get out and be as normal as you can be for a moment.